



The Omen

Through it all,
we're there for you

Journal entry, 4-21-96

*Sun, sand, a cool breeze,
a cold beer, and an Omen.*

The Omen

Volume 7, Number 10
April 26, 1996

*** EDITORS ***

(and their reason(s) for not having an issue in two weeks)

Jonathan Land.....Finishing Div II/Very sick
Ben Sanders.....Finishing Div I's and Div II
Stephanie Cole.....Finishing Div III
Dave Willcox.....None (Dave handed in stuff)
Josh Brassard.....Big Theater Project/Very sick
Amber Cortes.....Apathetic/Tripping

STAFF

Lauren Ryder.....I'm not sure about Lauren
Some Chick in Dakin.....Very Sick
Casey Nordell.....None (Casey handed in stuff)

CONTRIBUTORS

Jay Trudeau,
Sarah Brooks and Christina Spaulding

**"It's a menage a trois, you and me
and Heineken."**

-The Bloodhound Gang

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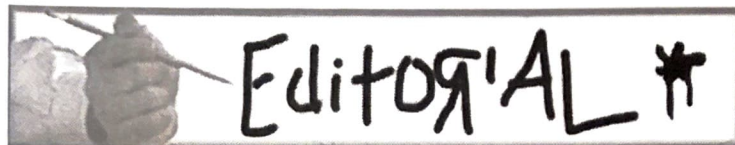
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Policy Box!

The Omen accepts from any member of the Hampshire community. We will not edit anything you write, as long as you are willing to be responsible for what you say. Libel, which we personally find amusing and entertaining for countless hours is just not able to be printed in this forum.

Submissions, which includes just about anything involving the Hampshire community in some way (news, opinions, artwork, etc.), are due on Saturday nights at 8:00 to the editor of the section in which you wish to appear, or to Ben Sanders (E-307, box 710), or Jonathan Land (E-311, box 527). We prefer submissions on disk (IBM or HIGH DENSITY Macintosh), although hard copy (on paper, dumbass) is okay as well. Label your stuff well and it will make it back to you with no problem.

So give us your news, commentary, short fiction, comics, satire, poetry, art, bulletins, questions, and anything else you can think of, and your beloved community rag will dish it back 700 times. What better way to be heard?



Journal Of A Div II Student

As I overlook the campus (and believe me, there's a lot to overlook) from the 360 degree windows of the Omen offices on top of the AstroNeedle building right next to Dakin, I fondly look back on my accomplishments as a student and community member here over the past three years.

You see, it's a time of reflection for me, having entered the crossroads between finishing Div II and starting Div III. Now I bet you're saying to yourself, "Wait, Jonathan Land does academic work here at Hampshire? I thought he was just here to annoy people!"

Well, the answer to those questions are respectively "yes", and "yes". You see, my Div II is filed in SS (as my Div III will be). I'm studying the effects of agitation and confrontation on 15-25 year olds to see what types of mental systems they use to counteract these unusual unpleasanties.

Obviously, I've been doing most of my field work here at Hampshire, where there is a high concentration of 17-22 year-olds. To get the rest of my sample, I go to area high schools, and the other colleges (especially the graduate departments of U-Mass and Smith.)

Now, the editors of some of

the journals that have published my work (or then, a work in progress) have questioned my ethics and morals on the grounds that I'm not conducting fair experiments, since the participants are unaware that they are, in fact, participants. I believe that if my participants were made aware of the situation, the results would be extremely corrupt and invalid.

You can't tell someone that you're going to start an argument with them, tell them to "respond naturally", and then expect them to behave in a manner that represents a real-life, actual conflict! Look at it this way: If I sit you down, and tell you that I'm going to give a half-hour lecture on why cripples need to be eliminated, you might get a little angered and incensed by it, but you'd know I'm trying to get a rile out of you, and therefore, you'd specifically try to behave either a) exactly as you assume I'd like you to react to the situation, or b) exactly the opposite of that. In both scenarios, you are reacting to your assumptions, as opposed to the actual event. On the other hand, if I go to a screening of Schindler's List somewhere in full Nazi regalia, my interaction with the other audience members is straight from the gut, with no pre-conceived

notions of how to act

Why am I even bothering telling you all this. You've never appreciated my art, you've never appreciated my work, and you'll never understand me. Well, I've tried hard with you people, only to discover my effort is wasted. I don't care anymore. My work is done, I don't need you people anymore.

Jonathan Land
Managing Editor
The Omen

Coming Soon!!!

Omen
Brand
Beef
Jerky

Est. 1996



It's Ass, For
Your Face!!!

Coming Soon!!!



Guns... Guns... Guns...

Guns on campus: good or bad? The rest of this should read "you decide." But you know what? This is Hampshire, where finding an informed opinion is about as difficult as locating an NRA bumper sticker in the FPH parking lot. So, I figure I'll just tell you what to think. Then it becomes not so much a matter of believing that all uzis should be beaten into weed-whackers, but feeling self-assured about regarding Stephanie Cole as an annoying prat. Which is a lot more fun, and not as prone to flying in the face of the Constitution.

In the capacity of News Editor, a function I perform seriously if not frequently, I had the opportunity this semester to interview the department of Public Safety. A few articles trickled from under my Divisionally III-challenged computer, and I got to have a few informative sessions with them regarding issues like equipment, backup, and the (apparently quite likely) possibility of Hampshire becoming the next crack combat zone of Western Massachusetts. Personally, I didn't feel the viability of that last one to be nearly as much of a threat as, say, the idea of transient Jehovah's Witnesses taking up lodgings in the rotting Habitat House, but then

again, I am one of the great uninformed mentioned in the paragraph above. So I listened, took a lot of notes, and churned out some articles.

One issue repeatedly raised during these little epic works of primary research was the lack of guns riding around on the hips of our security officers. At least twice, scenarios were depicted wherein I (the Hapless Victim) was working in my room (The Scene of the Crime), only to be have my studies interrupted by a knife-wielding maniac (The Swedish Chef). By the time my hall mates (Cowardly Hippies Who Couldn't Disarm a Paraplegic) figured out that they should call Public Safety (Unarmed and Comparatively Undangerous), things were getting pretty tense (Major Uncool). By the time Public Safety did arrive (Five Slashes and One Bloodstained RandomHouse Dictionary Later), aforementioned maniac would be firmly entrenched in my Room (Now a Scene from Evil Dead II).

He would be armed, and they would not. The one advantage being, that if I got killed, I wouldn't have to go through my Div III final meeting, an ordeal the anticipation of which is lead-

ing me to consider purchasing a fire-arm.

Well. As easy as the above two paragraphs would make it seems, gunplay and violence are not things to joke about. Unless you've had a beer or two. Or watching CNN. Or the person doing the beating is wearing a cute little clown suit...

I mean, gunplay and violence are nothing to joke about. I re-discovered this when I jokingly mentioned the Crime Scene scenario to some friends, an amalgam of which appears in the conversation below:

STEPHANIE: So, Public Safety doesn't have guns. Doesn't that weird you out? What if the "heavy shit" came down?

[NOTE: I have taken some liberties with my personality, as well.]

MY PAL: No. In fact, the only thing that weirds me out is that you even remotely consider guns on this campus a viable option. I like Hampshire because it *doesn't* have guns. Yup, I distinctly recall being pleased at the lack of guns.

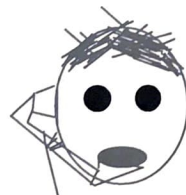
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Top 12 Reasons Why Phone Sex is Better than ACC

- 12 You actually get something for your 3.95/minute
- 11 ACC won't take credit cards
- 10 Phone sex has friendlier bill collectors
- 9 Unless you call the Lorena Bobbit Chat Line, phone sex operators won't cut off your long distance service
- 8 When you finish phone sex you don't get a callback
- 7 ACC sucks balls, but in a bad way
- 6 Phone sex operators speak English
- 5 Phone sex WON'T give you a headache
- 4 That buzzing noise on the line means something else
- 3 You can talk to a phone sex operator anytime day or night
- 2 It's easy to sign up for phone sex and get turned on
- 1 Phone sex won't keep changing the numbers on you



Hey Baby, what can I do for you tonight, you big hunk of sexy thing?



Umm.... could you please try to connect me with my mom, I haven't been able to get through to her yet this semester...oh and umm... talk dirty to me, Lovermeat.

Jay Trudeau,
with inspired contributions by Sarah Brooks and Christina Spaulding



Lisa F-in' Loeb? What Is This Crap?

Lisa Loeb: (I Missed Her)

Of all the bands that I've ever liked that nobody else does, I think the top two are the Spin Doctors and Lisa Loeb and Nine Stories. Luckily, I've had the chance to see both since I've gotten here at Hampshire College. The Spin Doctors played the Big E, the largest state fair on the east coast, in Springfield this past fall, and Lisa Loeb played this past Friday at Pearl Street. I know that Northampton, and indeed the whole valley area, is a really great place to catch some great music, but I'm so glad that we get so many "bands that suck" around here also. Especially since I like them so much. Anyway, while the Spin Doctors got their catapult into fame with "Little Miss Can't Be Wrong" and "Two Princes" and indeed the whole Pocket Full of Kryptonite" album, Lisa had a one-hit-wonder jump-start with the single "Stay (I missed You)" from the Reality Bites soundtrack. The two bands actually have a lot more in common than I'd originally thought. They both were struggling New York City club acts that hit it big for a while and eventually fell out of favour. The only difference is that

Lisa is still playing bars.... the Spin Doctors went from bar to arena to bar to state fairs... (that's gotta suck...) anyway, enough about Chris Barron and his cronies...

After Lisa's first single sold 750,000 copies worldwide, she was left with many record contract offers, from which she chose Geffen Records, because, she claims, "They seem like friendly people." My guess would be that the actual reason is because they (together with MTV) are the driving force behind the American music industry. But that aside, there was pressure for an album release by January (of '95), but with (surprise!) delays it was actually released in October (over fall break), where I was standing eagerly first in line (what line?) to buy it at a NYC record store. Now that there was an album of material (named Tails, after Lisa's apparent obsession with cats), and a new single, "Do You Sleep" there was a reason to tour again. And so she came to Pearl Street.

We arrived shortly after six thirty. After a short line and a hefty cover (thirteen bucks!), we walked in (me and my unhappy girlfriend Jenn who I dragged along, who will be happy to find this sentence ungrammatical).

This was my first time a Pearl Street. We ascended the stairs to the upstairs bar part (where apparently the "bigger" acts play), and along the staircase there were posters of Lisa Loeb on the wall which people were swiping. I decided to nick one myself (which now resides happily on the foil covered wall of my dorm room), especially because:

1. Everyone else was doing it, and if I didn't get one soon, someone else would get

it (and who deserves one more than myself, a lovable, long-time Lisa Loeb fan

who just paid 13 bucks a few seconds ago)

2. They were free.

3. At the sales booth they weren't selling any posters of Lisa Loeb (they stupidly

only offered this merchandise of the opening act "The Mummyheads")

So we get in and they harass us a bit about how we better not try to drink any beer or else they will surely throw us out and most definitely prosecute us. But we were set; we didn't want any beer. After a boring while, the opening act came out on the stage at seven.

(Warning: I lied; there is one more mention of the S. Doc-

Continued on the next page.

Did You Get The New Hootie Album Yet, Casey??? I Hear It's Real Good

Continued from the previous page.

tors in the next paragraph. You can skip the ¶ anyway, the opening act is boring to talk about, but I feel like I have to or something. Sorry, this is my first music column, and I'm just no Amber Cortes...

The Mummyheads were four of the funniest looking guys I've ever seen play rock and roll. They liked to bop around a lot and look like they were really into playing their instruments. There was a guitarist, a bassist, a drummer, and a keyboardist. The keyboard guy made it for because he liked to bop around the most, I dig organs, and he did rad backing vocals. They had a basic soft rock/white funk sound, putting them somewhere between the Spin Doctors and Crowded House, with a little room for improvisation and innovation, so mix in a bit of the Beatles and/or Phish and you get the basic idea. They would alternate their songs slow/funky/slow/funky... (i.e. suck/cool/suck/cool) because frankly, they were even worse at non-funky songs. We were sitting next to the drummers dad and mom (I later found out) who were smiling and tapping their feet the whole time. No encore was played after they ended at 7:45. Although they were pretty decent (it was actually interesting just to see who would open for Lisa Loeb?), after about a half hour of the Mummyheads, I started to feel like a mummy myself, so I'm

glad it was a smoking establishment, unlike some places I know (oh, wait, Pearl Street isn't in Amherst.... it's in Northampton....).

Lisa came out at twenty after eight to great applause. Wearing her trademark oval glasses, she wisely spoke no words first but busted right into the first track from Tails, "It's

Over" about a friend of her brother whose death made her think about "how some people relieve their depression through dying." After the second song, she stopped to say hello to the small (about two-hundred people crowded around the stage) and began a night long tradition of introducing songs by saying

Continued on the next page.

More Guns!!!

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STEPHANIE: Life's Rough.

STEPHANIE: Well, here, read this scenario. Doesn't it give you pause?

MYPAL: [Reads] Hmmp. Sort of funny, although personally I feel that capitalization technique is a little trite these days.

STEPHANIE: No, shithead, about the idea! That you could have six inches of cold steel in your gut and all Public Safety could do for you is call an ambulance! And watch it with that stylistic critique, pal. I call the shots around here.

MYPAL: I'm just saying that rendering every subject and object in a sentence into some Capitalized Entity does not make you an Amusing Writer. And furthermore, I'm saying that Guns Only Hurt. Hey...Stop that, You Bitch.

Moving on...I couldn't find one person on this campus who thought an armed Public Safety was a good idea. Considering that I generally only talk with my friends, who are a pretty sensible bunch, I decided to give the matter some serious thought.

And this is what I decided. Properly trained, I think guns for Public Safety would be okay. Just like, when properly trained, nuclear missiles are okay. You never know when the heavy shit it going to go down.

Gee. Div III sleep-deprivation makes me particularly deep, no?

Stephanie Cole
The Hampshire Omen

Oh Yeah, And Trent Reznor Is God

Continued from the previous page.

"We're gonna play a song..."

Four or five songs into the set, they busted into "Alone," my favorite Lisa Loeb song. Not much later, "Do You Sleep" followed, and near the end, "Stay." In between some songs she did have some things to do or say, providing limited audience interaction (although I have seen more at venues this size). During one break, a group in the back of the bar yelled out in unison, "We love you, Lisa!" to which she replied "Thanks." And once, when removing some fuzz from the end of her tongue between songs, someone yelled out, "Classy!" and she replied, "Classy or Sassy?" Before playing "Taffy" she threw pieces of taffy candy out to random audience members. She also started a one sided conversation about how she was supposed to play Manila as part of her world tour, but she wasn't allowed into the country by the government, because, in her opinion, "the right people weren't bribed or something." In the middle of one song, she came out with a rather prophetic sounding quote: "In other countries we sometimes count in other languages." But really as part of the end of this song, she counts "One, Two..." and the audience is supposed to yell, "Yeehaw!" On the trial run, everyone screamed it awfully loud, to both Lisa's and my surprise. She commented that she was amazed "that students weren't too cynical to participate in such

activities." Or something to that effect. Which reminds me, the age range for the room was people 16 and under (high school... and below) and the mid-thirties and upward. And of course Jenn and I (19 and 18 respectively). At one point Jenn asked me if I thought we looked like the rest of the loser high school kids there, and I said, "Probably."

Anyway, after the second boisterous "Yeehaw!" they busted into the ending of the song, which ended the set. As an encore, she played three songs, one alone, and two with the band. The conclusion is that it was a good show. The songs rocked harder than they did on the album, and there was room for much more improv and such, which both Lisa and her band (and the Mummyheads) took advantage of. My hallmate Kt. mentioned that live shows are usually a good place to see what a band really is because in the studio the record company has a contract and therefore great control over the band. Out on the road the band can basically do whatever they want, and therefore this is a good place to judge them (thanks Katie!).

On the downside, for having such a small venue, Lisa didn't treat her fans too personally. After the show a group of no more than twenty people waited by the backstage door, out of which emerged every member of both groups... except Lisa (which was, of course, who ev-

eryone wanted to see). She started seeing people one at a time, a security guard escorting them into her dressing room, but after a few fans, the guard told us that she had left. There were less than ten people left! Outside, I rejoined the group of eager vultures by the door of the tour bus, awaiting the signing of my CD and perhaps a quick meeting with Lisa, of which I would write about fondly in my Omen article upon return. Now, I understand that fame and idolatry are a bitch, and that hordes of fans are annoying, but I swear there were no more than six fans standing out side of that bus for twenty minutes and she never came out to meet us! I mean, how long would it take to greet six fans?!? Who of course would surely buy your next album (and now may not!) Eventually the tour manager approached us and collected our stuff (tickets, posters, CD inlays, etc.) and brought them into the bus, returning moments later with little signatures and messages on them. Mine says, "Thanks for coming to our show!" with some scribble under that that is unreadable and I suppose is supposed to be her signature. Whatever. So my review in one line:

pretty good show; live better than studio; coulda been nicer to fans

Music Review by:
Casey Nordell
Omen Staff

Composers for The Future

The term "Ambient Music" was first coined by Brian Eno in an effort to describe the type of atmospheric influence of his experiments with sound technology, and distinguish these from the light, background material known as muzak heard in shopping malls and elevators across the country. People had been experimenting in electronic music since the 50's and 60's, putting about here and there with the different sounds that machines make and how they can actually fit together as a musical piece, but Eno's idea to actually create a composition of sound that enhances atmosphere took sampling experimentation one step further: creating a complete musical picture of sound samples contained within an open aural field, making a "spacious" effect through separating the distance of the music from the listener, clustering different sounds together yet not binding them by any conventional musical standards.

Acid House was actually named for this process of combining different "chemicals", different pieces of other people's music, into a sort of new reaction of music. It was only later that clubgoers began to combine different chemicals of their own to produce psychedelic reactions to the music, thus rave was born. It is interesting to note, also, the variety of ways that the word ambient can be pronounced: there's ambient, pronounced ahm-be-ahnt, with the soft inflection reminiscent of the original French, or the more popular am-

be-ant, creating a harsher sounding, more Americanized version of the word. The details of the long standing debate on how the word is pronounced, however, has been resigned only to those people who argue about other such words such as tomato (tomato or tomatto?) and cyclic (sick-lick or syelic?) and really has never opened up into the realm of what we know of as normal thought.

Ambient began to incorporate many aspects of other genres of music, blending and crossing over different musical boundaries until each creation becomes something new within itself: space music, electronic rock, and dark ambient all took the idea of combining sound elements into a piece that takes you to varying "places" in your mind, evoking personal images and thoughts and feelings and tinting them into the various shades and levels of the music. Some types of industrial music can be considered ambient, such as the last recordings of Throbbing Gristle (Journey Through A Body and In The Shadow of The Sun), founders of industrial as an artistic movement, which began to take on an ambient feel by using the principles of anti-music and combination of noises into a definite whole. However, this differs radically from the idea that was originally behind ambient music—to induce calmness and a space to think. As it turns out, some people can actually think better to discordant or dissonant harmonies, distortion, and jarring percussive rhythms. One of the

interesting things that the melding of ambient and industrial has produced is a combination of the two elements—a flowing, subtle, and harmonious background with disturbing overlays of sound moving against the calm current, which may be what is the sound of a mind going slowly insane (at least that's how I've felt when listening to it).

Dealing with labels in the area of music is hard enough, but with ambient it is near impossible. What causes the problem is actually what makes ambient such an exciting and mobile phenomena—there is an overlapping of definitions because ambient itself is an overlapping of...practically anything you want. With the advent of more advanced recording equipment, right now literally anything is possible. Every sound yet produced is recorded somewhere, and within that, because ambient holds no conventions or boundaries as to the methods by which to combine them, any range of combinations of these samples is conceivable. Within the part, each individual sample, is everything ever connected to that sample, musically, symbolically, experientially- and synthesizing these elements can create limitless possibilities

as technology increases it's power, scope, and ability- the sonic landscapes that can be created are as vast

and infinite as anything the mind itself can comprehend. How's that for artistic freedom?

Amber Cortes

We Here At The Omen Hate Hypocrites So...

...we
just
thought
we'd
point out
that even
though
The Phoenix
seems to be quite
rabid to
jump on
Community
Council's
back,
there are
some in-
teresting
things in
their fi-
nancial
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14 SEP 1995

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note the
amount of
money
received
here from
Cass
Communi-
cations,
who place
ads in The
Phoenix.
Then note
that in that
time pe-
riod, the
money

earned from that never
seemed to make it into their
school account. Where did
it go? While you're look-
ing, you might also want to
take a look at the \$3500 that
was given to them for over-
spending from Community
Council. One source tells
me, that this happened
many semesters in a row!